

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-12 (Cancelled).

13. (Currently Amended) A composition in dosage form which comprises

an amount sufficient for accelerating mineral absorption, of a cyclic tetrasaccharide represented by cyclo{→6)-α-D-glucopyranosyl-(1→3)-α-D-glucopyranosyl-(1→6)-α-D-glucopyranosyl-(1→3)-α-D-glucopyranosyl-(1→} and/or a saccharide derivative thereof, ~~and~~

one or more members selected from the group consisting of mineral compounds, and

an amount sufficient for promoting mineral absorption of one or more members selected from the groups consisting of substances having a mineral absorption promoting action.

14. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 13, which comprises one or more members selected from the group consisting of monosaccharides, oligosaccharides, sugar alcohols, cyclodextrins, vitamins, water-soluble polysaccharides, spices, acidifiers, ~~delicious-taste imparting~~

seasoning, liquors, organic acids, non-organic acids, emulsifiers, perfumeries and colorants.

15. (New) A dosage form composition according to claim 13 wherein said one or more members selected from the group consisting substances having a mineral absorption promoting action comprises at least one vitamin selected from the group consisting of vitamin D, vitamin K, L-ascorbic acid and derivatives thereof.

16. (New) A method for accelerating mineral absorption in animals including humans, which comprises a step of administering to said animals an accelerator for mineral absorption comprising as an effective ingredient cyclic tetrasaccharide represented by cyclo{ \rightarrow 6)- α -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 3)- α -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 6)- α -D-glucopyranosyl-(1 \rightarrow 3)- α -D-glucopyranosyl(1 \rightarrow) and/or a saccharide derivative thereof, said saccharide derivative being a member selected from the group consisting of saccharides (I) where one or more of the same or different glycosyl residues are bound to said cyclic tetrasaccharide; saccharides (II) where one or more of the same or different glycosyl residues selected from the group consisting of α -D-glucopyranosyl residue, β -D-galactopyranosyl residue, and β -D-chitosaminyl residue have been transferred to one or more hydroxyl groups of the saccharides (I); and

saccharides (III) where one or more of the same or different glycosyl residues selected from the group consisting of α -D-glucopyranosyl residue, β -D-galactopyranosyl residue, and β -D-chitosaminyl residue have been transferred to the α -D-glucopyranosyl residue, β -D-galactopyranosyl residue, and β -D-chitosaminyl residue of said saccharides (II).

17. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein said accelerator further contains one or more members selected from the group consisting of mineral compounds, casein phosphopeptide, vitamins, polyphenol, monosaccharides, oligosaccharides, water-soluble polysaccharides, sugar alcohols, cyclodextrins, spices, acidifiers, seasonings, liquors, organic acids, non-organic acids, emulsifiers, perfumeries and colorants.

18. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein said mineral compound is one or more members selected from the group consisting of calcium compounds, magnesium compounds, potassium compounds, sodium compounds, iron compounds, manganese compounds, cobalt compounds, copper compounds, zinc compounds, selenium compounds, fluorine compounds, and iodine compounds.

19. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein said vitamin is one or more members selected from the group

consisting of vitamin D, vitamin K, L-ascorbic acid, and derivatives thereof.

20. ~~20.~~ (New) The method of claim 17, wherein said polyphenol is one or more members selected from the group consisting of flavonoids, catechin and epigallocatechin.

21. (New) The method of claim 17, wherein said oligosaccharide is one or more members selected from the group consisting of fractooligosaccharide, isomaltooligosaccharide, xylooligosaccharide, lactosucrose, soybean oligosaccharide, kojioligosaccharode, galactosylglucoside, saccharide derivative of α,α -trehalose, α,α -trehalose and/or α,β -trehalose.

22. (New) The method of claim 16, wherein said accelerator contains said cyclic tetrasaccharide and/or said saccharide derivative in an amount of at least 0.1% by weight, on a dry solid basis.